

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

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This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, war against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13:1 Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

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Quest
Editorial

**Cherubims and the Way of
the Tree of Life**

Part 2 of 4

Genesis 3:22-24 reads: "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

There are many misconceptions concerning these Cherubims spoken of in verse 24. *Webster's New World Dictionary* gives this definition of the word *cherub*: "any of the second order of angels, usually ranked just below the seraphims." In the previous articles on seraphims, we found that, according to the Bible, seraphims are not angels. You may ask, "Does the Bible teach that Cherubims are angels? and Where does the Bible teach that there are ranks and classes of angels?" The truth of the matter is that the Bible does *not* teach that Cherubims are angels or a class of angelic beings. In reality, the Bible does not teach ranks or classes of angels.

Someone may say, "The Bible talks about *archangels*." The Bible never employs the term *archangel* in the plural; it is used only in the singular. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel." Who is the archangel? and Who will descend with a shout?

According to this Scripture, "The Lord Himself." The word *arch* in Greek means "master or chief," and the Lord Himself is the Master or the Chief of angels. How do we know? In the Garden of Gethsemane He said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels" (Matthew 26:53)?

The only other place the word *archangel* appears in the Scriptures is in Jude 9, which refers to Michael the Archangel. The word *Michael* means "one who is like God." Who does that describe? In John 14:8 when Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father," Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Why? He is the One who is like God. Hebrew 1:3 says that He was "the express image of his person." Who is like God? Who is the Master of angels? Who is the archangel? Jesus Christ is the one.

Other than Christ, there are no other ranks, categories, or classes; all other angelic beings are just angelic beings. Also, everywhere the word "angels" appears in the Scriptures, it *never* relates to winged creatures. Therefore, these winged creatures are something other than angelic beings. Where do the Scriptures teach that Cherubims are angels? and Where does the Bible teach ranks and classes of angels? The truth is, the Bible teaches neither.

The word *cherub*, which is singular, is mentioned twenty-seven times in nineteen verses. *Cherubim*, which is plural, is mentioned sixty-five times in the Scriptures in fifty-seven verses. This lets us know that the teaching of these Cherubims is important in the Scriptures. Why did these Cherubims appear on the scene? Because verse 24 says "he drove out man." Why did God do that? Verse 22 tells us, "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth

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Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Faith That Will Not Quit



Brother Roger L. Decker

Earnestly Contend for the Faith

We are living in a day and age when battle lines are being drawn. We are in a spiritual battle, and the battle is over the faith. The Scripture says in Ephesians 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Another translation of the same verse says this: "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this dark-

ness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." Dear one, the struggle is over the faith.

Jude wrote in Jude 3, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The word contend means "to labor fervently, to fight, to compete as for a prize." Paul, at the close of his life, said in 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The

Word of God lets us know that he did not fight carnally, or fleshly. There is just too much carnality and fleshly fighting today. Church, we do not fight carnally, but our warfare is mighty through God. We are in a spiritual battle; therefore, we cannot fight this battle in the flesh.

First Corinthians 15:32 says, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die." When the Apostle Paul said he fought with beasts at Ephesus, he was not speaking of literal beasts such as lions, tigers, or

bears; but he was speaking of warring against men who acted savage and as fierce as beasts.

To be a Christian and to stay a Christian, one must be a fighter: one must have the backbone to stand for what is right and have faith that will not quit. Being a Christian is not for whiners and babies. Christian friend, you should not give in or cower down every time the enemy comes in with an attack. It takes a real man or woman to live for God. Your faith is going to be tested and tried, right down to the close of time.

There is an all-out attack on the saints of God. If you do not have what it takes to finish, you need to get it, because the enemy will not leave you alone. You may say, "I wish he would give me a break for a while," but he is not going to do that. Just about the time you think the enemy is going to leave you alone awhile, you need to be on your guard, because something is coming your way. Nevertheless, you need to have faith in Almighty God. He will take care of you, though circumstances may not change when you want them to. Often we want things to change quickly, but we may have to wait awhile.

Look to the Higher Power

Many cannot take persecution, so they just give up serving God. Saint, you have to leave some things with God. He knows more about how to take care of situations than you ever will. You need faith that will not quit. Becoming a Christian is not a sign that the battle is over. The battle begins when you change kingdoms. Becoming a Christian does not mean that all your problems are going to work out over night, but if you have faith in God and live right, He will take care of those things.

Today people, are so quick to listen to garbage. Many "garbage collectors" and "trash haulers" are around, and they love to drop things in people's ears. What should you

do if they try to dump garbage in your ears? You need to shut them off, listen to the Spirit of God, and continue to serve God. Also, you need to get into the house of God, listen to the Word of God, and attend the prayer services. You must do all the things that you know are right, and God will take care of everything else. You should not be a whiner because you have persecution. Persecution will come. If people are persecuting you, you must have something the devil wants. If you are not being persecuted, you should check your experience.

You need to have faith that God will take care of you. You may ask, "How can God deliver me from the mess that I am in?" You need to leave the "how" with God. The only thing He wants you to do is believe in Him and have faith in Him. Some things may look impossible to you, but God does not need you to try to work it out. He is God, the Creator, the God of the universe. He is the great I AM and a universal God, yet He is a personal God. I am not talking about a god made of silver or wood or stone. I am talking about the great I AM, the Almighty God, who can speak peace to your soul in a moment of time.

Paul said in Colossians 1:13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Darkness has a power to it. That is the reason a person cannot get saved anytime he or she wants to. You must be delivered from the power of darkness. That is quite a power over the natural man, but there is a higher power—God Almighty. In another translation the same verse says, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son." What a change! What a transfer!

Watch and Be Strong

In the Old Testament you can read about a battle between Israel of old and the Philistines. The elders of

Israel sent for the ark, which was at Shiloh, and brought it back into the camp. They had already been defeated, and they knew there was no sense in going out without God. When the ark was brought back into the camp, the people shouted and the Scripture says "the earth rang again." (Wherever God is, there is still shouting and praising God, and the tabernacle rings with the praises of God.) The Philistines heard the shouting and asked, "What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" Someone told them that the ark of the Lord was in the camp.

First Samuel 4:7 says, "And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore." They were afraid, so when they went out to battle, they needed encouragement to fight hard and not give up. Real men are known for the fact that they do not quit.

The Philistines had to have some motivation, so their leader motivated them by saying in 1 Samuel 4:9, "Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight." Now, there was no way the Philistines wanted to become servants of Israel. They would rather have had the people of Israel become their servants. The Philistines would not entertain the thought of giving up. Child of God, you need that same determination. You should not want to be enslaved by the devil. Do not give up and quit or you will become a servant of the devil. Friend, you are serving one master or the other. If you are not serving God, you are serving the devil, no matter how many churches you have joined. You must be born of the Spirit of God.

Child of God, do not lose faith in God and quit serving Him. You do not want to become a slave to the devil. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:13, "Watch ye, stand fast in the

faith, quit you like men, be strong." Friend, God wants you to be alert and to stand firm in the faith. A child of God dresses differently from this world. A godly man will not wear anything that pertains to a woman, and a godly woman will not wear anything that pertains to a man. God wants a woman to look and act as a woman should, and He wants a man to look and act as a man should. Have you ever noticed the little symbols on the restroom doors, especially at international airports? They put a silhouette of a woman wearing a dress on the women's restroom doors and a silhouette of a man wearing trousers on the men's. Those symbols are recognized in every nation.

A real man distances himself from looking feminine. He will not go around wearing earrings. A woman wants a real man for a husband, not a sissy or a whiner. On the other hand, a godly woman will not wear a necktie. She will distance herself from the wearing of men's apparel. She does not want to look masculine; she wants to look feminine.

What are the duties of a woman? A woman should know how to cook, how to repair clothing, and how to clean a house. Also, she should love and care for her children. She should not drop them off at a day care center. A godly mother makes sure that her children attend the worship services at the house of God and attend Sunday school. She also submits to her husband, even though she disagrees with him, just as the saint submits to God even when he or she does not understand something fully.

The Strongest Weapon of Our Warfare

Child of God, do not give up praying for your lost loved ones. Do not let your faith die just because you do not receive an immediate answer. The Lord may be working something that you do not see. Though you do not see any outward

signs, that is no indication that God is not moving. Do not go by what you can see with your physical eyes. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." You cannot always see God working on things. Often people get discouraged and quit praying, and then they miss many blessings.

In Matthew, Chapter 26, we have a picture of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Verses 36 and 38 read: "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." His will had to come into submission to the Cross. Mark 14:38 says, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

How did Jesus bring the flesh under? He used the strongest weapon of our warfare—prayer. He did not pray just once, but He prayed three times. We read in Matthew 26:44, "And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words." Faith will not give in to the pressures of the flesh. Friend, though the pressure becomes extreme, do not give in to the flesh. Walk in the Spirit, and keep your faith in God. The just shall live by faith.

Paul sought the Lord three times concerning a "thorn in the flesh." Second Corinthians 12:8-9 says: "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Do not be a quitter just because you do not get an immediate answer.

Consider the Faith of Elijah

The Scripture says in James 5:17-18: "Elias [Elijah] was a man

subject to like passions as we are [in other words, he had passions and desires just as you and I do], and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

First Kings 18:41-46 tells us: "And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."

King Ahab, upon hearing the news that the famine was going to be over, was glad. He was going to eat and drink. However, Elijah went up on top of the mountain to pray. (If people would get hold of God today, we would see many things come to pass in a greater way.) Elijah's prayer was in earnest, and he sent his servant to look seven times. His prayer was divine. Coming down from the mountain, Elijah ran ahead of Ahab's chariot, and that certainly had to be divine. It rained, just as the man of God said it would. Elijah had faith that did not quit.

Having Persistent Faith

We read in Luke 18:1-8: "And he spake a parable unto them to this

end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint [if you do not pray, you will faint]; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

The Scripture says that judge feared not God nor regarded man, but a widow troubled him by her continual coming. The Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge saith." What did the unjust judge say? He said in verse 5, "Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge

her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." He was not doing it to please God or to please man. He was doing it because he was weary with her continual coming to him. He probably scowled and frowned at her, but she had faith that would not quit.

Now, when you or I come to God, we are not coming to an unjust judge. We have One who is just, One who bids us to come to Him. The widow woman would not take no for an answer or be ignored. This judge was unjust, but our Judge is just. Jesus said that God would avenge us speedily, or quickly. Let us read verses 7-8 again: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

Psalm 66:19 says, "But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer." Faith is a firm conviction; it is a persuasion in God. Christian friend, do

not give in to the flesh and let the flesh have its way. You need to pray as Jesus did, until the will of God is foremost in your life. Do not quit when something goes wrong. Things are going to go wrong. Nevertheless, I would rather go through trials with God to help me than without Him. Won't you be a real man or woman for God and have faith that will not quit? We are in a battle, so that means we must put on the whole armor of God. We have to go to God through the office of prayer to get the strength we need to stand.

Again, Hebrews 11:1-3: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." You must have faith that will not quit, faith that will not settle for anything but believing in God.

(Cassette C-4188E)

Radio Log



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Newark, Ohio	WCLT-AM 1430	Sunday	7:35 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
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Cleveland, Ohio	WHK-AM 1420	Sunday	2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
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Little Rock, Arkansas	KMLT-AM 760	Sunday	5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
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Tune in to the radio station nearest you to hear an inspiring message from the Word of God. If you enjoy the broadcast, let us hear from you!

1 Samuel 28:1 And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

Saul's Journey to Endor



Brother C. H. Dickerson

The "Little Things" Are Important

This text of Scripture reminds me of what John said about the devil in Revelation. He said that in the evening time, the devil would be loose for a season and deceive the nations once more. Matthew 24:24 tells us, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders;

insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." When Paul's life was ending, he said in 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." In other words, he had done what God had told him to do; he had finished his mission.

The enemy of souls has set out in these last days to deceive people.

Today we are seeing things happen that let us know we are coming to the end of time. The Scriptures tell of many signs of the end of time. One is found in Luke, which tells us that men's hearts will fail them for fear. He was not speaking of men having fatal heart attacks, but he was speaking of men losing heart and failing God. I have never seen such backsliding as I have seen in the day and

age in which we are living. People are not putting their hearts into the things of God as they once did.

Consider the mind set of people today. For example, someone may be standing on a street corner and see an automobile accident. Yet, if someone were to ask that person to be a witness, that individual would say, "I don't want to be involved." This same thing is happening in the church. By their actions, people say, "I don't want to be involved. I'm going to straddle the fence." Friend, you cannot straddle the fence and serve God.

The devil has never made things look as attractive as he has in the day and age in which we are living. He is making immodest dress and modern religion look attractive. He wants people to take an easier way. He is causing people to think that they can get by with just a little adornment and that everything will be fine as long as they do not go too far. You may hear people say, "These little things don't matter." On the contrary, the little things do matter. If you think little things do not matter, take your car that has a distributor on it and pull out the rotor and see if it will work. You will find that it will not work. The same is true with the things of God. Little things are killing the influence of some who claim to be God's people. Also, they do not have the victory that they once had because of the little things they are involved with.

Turning to Things You Once Condemned

Verse 3 of our Scripture text lets us know that Saul once condemned all those who had familiar spirits and drove them out of the country. However, after Saul failed God, He would not answer him, so Saul called on a woman with a familiar spirit and promised her that she would not be punished. It is hard to believe that those ten verses are talking about the same person. Since Saul had condemned that practice earlier, that woman stood in amaze-

ment.

You need to look at how Saul got in that condition, because if you are not careful, the devil will lead you down the same path. You need a determination in your heart that you are going to serve God, stand against everything that is against Truth, and stand for everything that is Truth. If you fail to do that, you could end up on the path of condoning and practicing the sin that you once condemned. The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 2:18, "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." Christian friend, you need to ask yourself if you are still standing for biblical principles.

The devil has set out to deceive you. If you are not careful, little by little, he will lead you down a road that leads to building again the things that you once destroyed. At one time many Church of God folks stood against adornment, but today you cannot tell them from the world by the way they dress. They have let down little by little. You do not have to be deceived if you take a stand for the Gospel and continue to stand for Truth and the standard that God has given us.

All who choose to follow the downward road will end up at the same place. Protestantism once took a stand against Catholicism. That is the reason they are called Protestants. But what are we seeing today? We are seeing them go back and condone the pope. They are following the same things they once stood against. They are bringing observances that once belonged to Catholicism into Protestantism today. One such observance is Lent, and another is Ash Wednesday. At one time many took a stand against Babylon and every man-made organization that has tried to make itself a name and an independent way to Heaven. Today some are going back to Babylon. They are going down the same road that Saul went down.

The devil wants you to build again the things that you once destroyed, but you do not have to. You

can walk with God, uphold the standard, and be what God would have you to be. God will take care of you and take you through.

Failing to Do What Is Right

Friend, you need to observe the first recorded deviation that Saul took to get into the condition he was in. According to Matthew Henry and other commentators, the journey to Endor was about seven miles from Gilboa and was over difficult roads. Saul needed much help to travel there, but he pressed his way to get down to the very thing that he once condemned. Any time a person turns away from God, he must go against his conscience, against the Holy Spirit's chastisement, and against moral conduct. On the other hand, if one never takes the first step in the wrong direction, he will not end up at the wrong destination.

Let us consider the first step that Saul took in the wrong direction. We read in 1 Samuel 13:8-12: "And he [Samuel] tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering. And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering." When Samuel asked Saul what he had done and why, Saul blamed others (that is the spirit of our age).

Later Saul failed to do what God said. God said to destroy every-

thing—the babies, the animals, the adults, and the king; but Saul said he brought back the choice animals and the king because the people wanted him to. Failing to do what is right goes on in our day. The reason more ministers do not take a stand for God's eternal Truth is that people do not want them to. They are afraid to take a stand, but that excuse will not work before the judgment bar of God. It did not work in Saul's day, and it will not work today.

Saul paid the price for his actions. If you are wishy-washy and do not take a stand, you will pay the price for it. You cannot straddle the fence. You ought to take a stand for God's eternal Truth in the face of the enemy, no matter what other people do. You must give an account before God for the decisions you make.

First Samuel 13:13-14 tells us: "And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly [he did something that God said not to do and then blamed others]: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee."

Saul lost the kingdom over which he ruled. Saint, you are in the Kingdom of God, and you are ruling over sin. If you do not keep the commandments that God has given, you will not rule over sin any longer, but sin will rule over you.

Overriding God's Word

The first transgression that Saul committed was to assume power that was not his. He tried to assume the power of the priest's office and offer a sacrifice. He first acted according to human insight and reasoning. That will get you into much trouble. In verse 12 Saul said,

"Therefore said I, The Philistines will' come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD." He did what he thought was right in his own eyes, but it was not what God said. Many people today are doing what they think is right, but it is not what God said. Friend, what you think is right in your own eyes does not mean anything as far as God is concerned. Human reasoning cannot override what God says.

God has always insisted that people keep His commandments. He will not put up with deviations in any way, shape, or form. He wants you to make sure that you do exactly what He says. He said in Proverbs two times, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12;16:25). Many people have fallen because they did what they felt was right, but it was not God's way. If your way deviates from what God has said, you had better get that thought out of your mind in a hurry, because it will do for you what it did for Saul. He offered a sacrifice because Samuel was not there; however, that was contrary to God's way. As a result, God did not bless it. He will not bless over the top of sin yet today. God wants you to do what He tells you to do and to live the way His Word says to live. You must forget what man says and do what God says or He will not bless you.

Yielding to Pressure

Next, Saul yielded to the pressures and the circumstances around him. In Exodus, Chapter 32, you can read of how Aaron made the golden calf. He collected the gold and molded it; but he said he just threw it in the fire and it came out a calf, and then the people danced around it. Why did he do that? Because Moses was not there. The reason Saul offered a sacrifice was that Samuel was not there. The rights of the priesthood were not Saul's; therefore, God's standard was pulled

down to Saul's own level. Today instead of people asking God to lift them, they try to pull God's standard down to themselves.

God has a standard. He has a standard for your dress, for your hair, for the company you keep, and for where you go. Too many have cooled off in their experience with God and are working against God's standard. The Bible lets you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. There is no use trying to pull the standard down to fit yourself. You need to measure to God's standard.

Paul taught in Hebrews 12:26, "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Paul was not talking about the literal earth or the firmament of heaven. He was speaking of a spiritual earthquake to call people out of earthly, man-made organizations. In this third earthquake, which we are in, He is also shaking the church to get everything out of the church that should not be there. God has a beautiful church that is pure. His church does not have compromisers in it. God's people stand for His eternal Truth though they go through the fire.

Paul wrote in verse 27, "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." What was He saying? In this earthquake we had better get hold of Truth and hang on, because God is going to shake off everyone who has deviated from Truth.

He continued in verse 28, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, [God's standard and His kingdom cannot be moved. He has already set the bounds of how one can get into it, and the only way to get in is to come through the Door, Jesus Christ. When one comes through the Door, he enters a kingdom that cannot be moved.] let us have grace [grace came by Jesus Christ], whereby we

may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." He let us know that the bounds of the kingdom cannot be extended; it is not going to become broader. Paul was saying, in so many words, "You cannot change it, so just pray for grace so that you can measure up to God's standard."

Deliberate Disobedience

Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:1, "This know also, that in the last days perilous [dangerous] times shall come." We are living in one of the most dangerous times, spiritually, in which man has ever lived. The devil has turned loose every power he has to defeat us. Second Timothy 3:3 speaks of a people who are fierce: "Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good."

Isaiah said in Isaiah 33:18-20: "Thine heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? where is the receiver? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand. Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." God's people are a peaceful people. There are no wars in the church. In fact, Jesus said in the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). The only ones who are going to see God are the peacemakers. Those who try to stir up trouble will not make Heaven their home, because Jesus said they would not.

Isaiah said Zion was a city of peace and a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that would not be taken down. Also, he said that none of the stakes would ever be removed nor the chords broken. That is not going to

change. No one can pull down the standard or tear down the church. The church will stand. Your battle is to make sure that you stay in the church. How can you do that? You must lift up the standard and do what God tells you to do. If you do exactly what God tells you to do, you will keep the standard.

The next point that we can observe concerning Saul was his deliberate disobedience. God said to destroy all the Amorites and all the animals, but instead Saul sinned in sparing what God said to destroy. Friend, you can never excuse yourself for condoning what God says to destroy. Jesus said in Luke 19:27, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

Some people will not let Christ reign over them. They will not be subject to His Word. Christian friend, you should not keep a close relationship with such people, because you will become tainted by them. Deuteronomy 33:27 says, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them."

God is exposing people today and showing the spirits they have by what they do. Friend, the Word of God talks about a little leaven leavening the whole lump. How does God expose the enemy? When people do not possess the Spirit of God, He said He would bring that out. It is up to you to kill that close relationship, because if you do not, that little leaven will destroy your soul.

Following a Multitude to Do Evil

Saul was to lead the people, and the people were to follow. First Peter 5:2-3 says: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Saul was not

supposed to follow the people. Likewise, God has called the ministry to lead the people. Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." In other words, He was saying, "Give them something to help them to grow and develop." Ministers, doing what the people wanted them to do has brought down many ministers. The people wanted Saul to bring some things back. Because Saul gave heed to the people, it brought his destruction. Likewise, because of Aaron's actions, many people were destroyed. When Moses came down from the mountain, he said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him stand over here." Of those twelve tribes, only one tribe stood with Moses. The rest of them were destroyed because the people did not obey what God said.

Things have not changed today. People are still following others, and they are going down. You need to get your eyes off people and get them on God. You must live up to the Bible standard and do what God says, and then you will be spared. Just because a multitude is going another way does not mean they are right.

Deuteronomy 28:13-15 reads "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them: An thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee."

God wants the church to be the leader of this old world, not the follower. In other words, God has set the standard for His church. If you are not careful, friend, you will follow after the standards of the world. All that the world has to do

is change its standard, and not long afterward some who claim to be God's people will follow that same standard. That is not what God wants. God set the standard in the very beginning, and He meant for each of us to follow His standard. He said if you would not do this, curses would be upon you. Verses 16-19 state: "Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out." In other words, your labors will be unfruitful.

God wants the church to set the standard for this lost and dying world. Today most religious people have become so worldly that you cannot tell the difference between them and the world. They all look alike and dress alike. God's people dress and act as saints should. God does not want His people to follow the world. Dressing immodestly and wearing adornment is of the world and has no place in the church.

Sacrificing Godly Principles

According to Deuteronomy 28:13-19, if you do not obey the Lord's commands, you will become the tail and not the head, and you will be cursed. America was once known as a Christian nation, but today her standards have dropped to an all-time low. If you were to look at the history of crime and illegal drugs, you would see that America ranks near the top of all the corruption that is going on. As a result, God's Word lets us know that the cities, the fields, the stores, the cattle, the sheep, and all these things would be cursed, or unfruitful.

The head is the leader, and God's people need to be the leader by setting the standard rather than following the standards of the world. God's cause can never advance by sacrificing holy principles.

In too many cases, worship services have become entertainment services. Some congregations that were once on fire for God have become worldly. In their services they allow about one hour and fifteen minutes for music, singing, and entertainment, but when it comes time to preach the Word, they have only about fifteen minutes of time left. My friend, we do not hold church services to entertain but to preach God's eternal Word. God wants adequate time allowed to preach the Gospel.

We are living in a day and age when many preachers have tried to modernize their services by having contests and using Babylonian tactics and ideas. These things are not acceptable to God as substitutes for His commandments, and they never will be. If you are going to serve God, you must live the Word of God daily so that others can see something different than what the world has to offer.

Saul started on a downward path. Friend, if you start down the wrong path, you never know how far down the devil will take you. If you were to drive on an icy road and your car started to slide, it would be almost impossible to control. The first wrong step for Saul was disobedience, but that was only the beginning. It only takes one drink for a person to start down the road toward alcoholism. Many fine young people have overstepped godly principles in their dating and ended up in moral corruption. The first immoral thought can lead to the actual deed.

The Spirit of Jealousy

Saul started down the wrong road, and his condition declined rapidly. He became jealous of David. One of the worst spirits there is in our day is an old jealous spirit. If you are jealous of someone because that person can play an instrument better than you can, preach better than you can, sing better than you can, pray better than you can, or receives more recognition than you

do, that seed of jealousy will bring you down.

Saul could not stand the company of one who was truly anointed of God. Do you find yourself shunning the company of the saints? If you enjoy the company of the saints, then you should be at the house of God every time there is a service. If you shun the saints, something is wrong. Do you find yourself more comfortable with those who fall short of the standard? If so, something is wrong. Friend, when God's Spirit is in you, you love the standard of God's Word and the company of the saints. God said, "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27).

Staying away from the thing you love is difficult. The reason people do not go to the house of God is that they love something else. When people love God and God's people, they want to be around God's people. Every time the church door is open, they will be there. When people say, "Oh, I love to be with God's people," but they never show up at the church services, something is wrong. I go to the house of God every Sunday because I love to associate with God's people. I love to attend the camp meetings. I enjoy the praises of God and good messages that search the heart. When you love these things, that is where you will be. If you love God's Truth, you are going to be where the Truth is.

The spirit of jealousy will separate people. If one were jealous of an individual, he would not want to be around that person. After Saul became jealous of David, his next step was to cast a javelin at David to try to kill him. He once held David in high esteem when he defeated the giant. When the spirit of jealousy works, instead of people lifting others up and holding them in high esteem, they throw a spiritual javelin at them and do everything they can to kill their influence. Some people throw javelins of criticism, backbit-

ing, insubordination, falsehoods, and false allegations.

David was not the one who had changed. He was the same as he always had been. Who had changed? The javelin thrower. That happened because Saul had an evil heart. When David went out to meet the giant, he put on Saul's armor to please Saul, but he told Saul: "This will not work. I have not tried this armor. The only thing I am sure of is this slingshot that I have. God delivered me from the lion and the bear, and I know that He will deliver me from this giant." So he took off Saul's armor, and Saul praised him. He said, "You be careful, David, because you are dealing with a man of war."

David went out and killed that giant, and then he took Goliath's sword and cut off his head. When he went back, Saul had nothing but praise for him. There was so much praise for David from the people that Saul became jealous of him. Next, instead of praising David, Saul wanted to kill him. In his heart he did slay him. David was still the humble, young man he had always been, but the javelin thrower possessed an evil spirit.

An Evil Heart

To walk with God, you must have a humble heart and do what God tells you to do. A jealous spirit will cause one to whisper and throw false allegations at others. The thing that causes all of this is an evil heart. Jesus said in Mark 7:21-23: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." These things happen because the heart is defiled.

The road to Endor led to doom. Through the shadows of the night, the Scripture tells us that this God-forsaken king slipped down to Endor. He disguised himself and tried to hide behind a false personality. He

put on clothes different from what a king's attire was and sought out the witch of Endor. Saint, I want you to realize that you need to wear the proper attire. If God has called you to be a helper, then you should be a good helper. Do not try to exalt yourself and try to be like someone else. Saul pretended to be something that he was not. Furthermore, he would have never tolerated anyone else doing that.

Verses 9-10 of our Scripture text read: "And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing."

After Saul left the witch's place, he went into battle and committed suicide. Also, his three sons and armor bearers died. Why? Because he refused to be obedient, and little by little, he got in worse shape. The Spirit of God, often through a faithful man of God, will warn one when he is heading the wrong direction. Nevertheless, that person can override the warnings and start on a downward path. Remember, if you start that downward path, there is no telling what your end will be. Saul went lower and lower, until he did the very thing he once stood against.

Friend, I want you to realize that when a person dies spiritually, he never dies alone. People always affect others, and they also die spiritually. When one backslides; he affects others. Paul talked about this in the Hebrew letter when he said, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25).

Has God Departed From You?

If you want to serve God, you must take a stand for God and for

Truth. You cannot take a stand for God and associate with people who have left Truth. Truth has cost many people their lives. It will still cost you something yet today, but it will be worth it to make Heaven your home.

You may think, "If I leave, no one will miss me." Friend, that is the devil talking to you. If you were to backslide, your children, your companion, and your relatives would be affected. Also, the congregation would be affected. You would be missed and you would ruin your family. It would affect your Sunday school teacher, the song leader, the choir director, and the pastor.

Parent, where are you leading your children? Young person, where are you leading your girlfriend or boyfriend? You have a responsibility, and you must give an account to God. You need to search yourself. The devil is doing his best to deceive people. He has deceived many people, and he is still working.

Where are you leading people? Where are you leading your family? Are you leading them to a cooled-off position? Are you leading them to the place where they will lose confidence in the Truth? I say again, you must give an account. One of the saddest Scriptures in the Word of God is found in 1 Samuel 28:15, which says, "God is departed from me." Verse 18 lets us know that he failed to keep God's commandments: "Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day." Friend, do you still have God? If so, do not let Him depart from you.

Saul was warned, yet he failed to keep the commandments that God had given him. Are you obeying the voice of the Lord? The voice of the Lord will tell you the same thing the Word of God does. Are you keeping the Word of God or drifting off track? You need to think about this, because what you do affects others. God told Saul what to do through Samuel, but Saul failed to

be obedient, and it cost him his soul. It also cost him the lives of many people who associated with him, including his sons whom he loved.

God wants you to follow Truth and to be lead by the Holy Spirit.

Be Serious

Once a traveler journeyed at night, toward a river swollen by recent rains. A man met him and said in an indifferent way, "Are you aware that the bridge is gone?"

"No," was the answer. "Why do you think so?"

"Oh, I heard such a report this afternoon and you had perhaps better not proceed."

Deceived by the man's uncertain manner, the traveler continued on his way. Soon another man upon meeting him cried, "Sir, sir, the bridge is gone!"

"Oh, yes," replied the wayfarer, "someone told me that story a little distance back, but from the careless tone with which he told it, I am sure it is an idle tale."

"Oh, it is true, it is true!" exclaimed the other. "I know the bridge is gone, for I barely escaped being carried away with it myself. Danger is before you and you must not go on."

In great earnestness he grasped the traveler by the hands and clothes beseeching him to act upon his advice. Convinced by his manner, the traveler turned back and was saved.

Both informants knew the bridge was gone and both warned of the danger ahead, but the difference in their manner made the difference of life or death. All around us are heedless travelers on the broad way of destruction, and if they are to be won to the path of life and peace, there must be a burning zeal glowing in the heart and manifesting itself in the conversation and actions of God's people. It is not enough to warn men. There must be earnestness back of that warning if the desired result is to be obtained.

Someone may ask, "How can I know who is right?" One way you will never get fooled is by trying the spirits. You must get your eyes off people with bad spirits and get them on God. The Bible says to try the

spirits. If they are not right, you had better flee. When the spirit is right, you need to stay where you are and walk with God.

(Cassette C-4206M)



LABOR DAY

*Fellowship
Meeting*

September 4

TWO SERVICES

10:00 A.M. 2:30 P.M.

The Church of God

6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH

Meals provided by the local congregation.

Revival

September 11-17

Monday-Friday 7:00

Saturday 7:00 p.m.

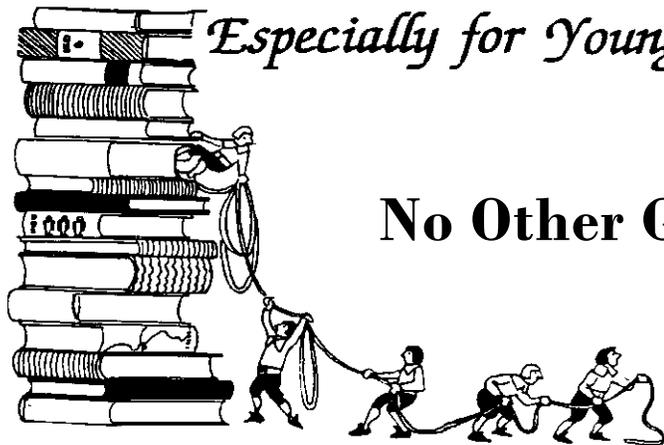
Sunday 6:00 p.m.

For more information contact:

Pastor C. H. Dickerson

(330) 725-6853 or (330) 725-5993

Especially for Young People



No Other Gods



The young man had been listening so intently that his eyes had not left Jesus' face. One could not help notice his fine clothing. When Jesus paused in His teaching, the young man edged closer as though trying to gather enough courage to say something. Jesus must have sensed this, for He paused, looked into the young man's face, and waited for the question. "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" the young man's weak but excited voice croaked.

Jesus' answer did not discourage the young man, for he was keeping all the laws Jesus mentioned. But then Jesus looked into his heart and said, "There is one thing lacking, sell everything you have and distribute to the poor, and you shall have riches in heaven" (Mark 10:17-22).

The young man's eyes dropped as his heart sank, for he was very wealthy. The young man left Jesus sorrowful, realizing he could not serve two gods.

Is your god a brand new car with power brakes and power steering? Are your payments so high that the church tithe has to suffer? Or is it a little black book with figures and dollar signs inside? Is it the educational degrees? Perhaps the important church job is most important.

The fine occupation with the excellent paycheck or the hobby which ties up devotional time and Christian service time can easily be in first place. Perhaps the family with important friends is the idol. Each of us needs to take some time off to

decide if we have other gods which are becoming too important in our lives.

In many countries the people are allowed to have an idol representing the thing most precious to them whether it be the sun or good health or prosperity. No so in so-called Christian lands. Here we have only two main classifications: the believer and the nonbeliever. However, we rarely find a person who will admit to being agnostic, much less to taking an atheist position. We might be fooling ourselves here. Perhaps we think we are speaking with the tongues of angels, crying, "Lord, Lord," going to church each Sunday, and yet actually being agnostic.

We would be the first to protest if an agnostic presented his beliefs in our company, so very sure that his beliefs are not ours. At least we would protest with our lips, even though at the same time we might be losing interest in serving God and in giving Him our time and thoughts and money.

The very first commandment states: "I am the Lord thy God . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The second commandment forbids graven images which we might bow down and serve. Then in very forceful language it goes on: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." Each of us will no doubt stoutly exclaim here that we have no graven images, that we do worship the one and only God. Millions of Sunday church-Boers do worship the real

Lord, at least for a few hours on Sunday. One fact perhaps is not being realized here: God is not satisfied with merely being worshiped. He demands that we worship Him only. He truly is a jealous God. Often we do allow other gods to creep into our lives, and soon the only time we do worship God is on Sundays. This possibly totals four hours. Many of us spend twice that amount of time mowing our lawns, washing our cars, or cleaning our houses.

If I only give lip-service and not heart-service to God, then I am leaving myself wide open for other gods. If other things do not take over, self most surely will. Trying to worship and serve both self and God results in halfheartedness in time, talents, and money. Our pastor once said: "We have to have a glory to live for-if not God's, then our own. And if we live for our own glory, we are always bumping into someone else living for his own glory!"

A few years ago I read that a good question to ask anyone is, "Tell me who you are in three sentences." In my best teenage sneakiness, I tried it on my parents. I thought I could really put them on the spot, but they both came through with flying colors. Both were completely aware that they first belonged to God. I doubt that my first answer would have been so thoughtful. Perhaps we each need to sit and think every so often just who we are and what is most important to us.

In a recent Sunday school class we were asked how long it had been

since we had witnessed to someone that God is good to us. In your conversations is it more important to you that you let your friend know in an indirect way that your golf scores are nearing the ninety mark or by using the same subtle ways to let him know Whom you worship?

Let us get down to business with our devotional lives. Jesus asked in almost pleading tones, "Learn of Me." This is where the strength will come. This is a guarantee against those graven images, or of self creeping into first place. The peace which passes all

understanding will be there and suddenly it will not be such a chore to attend church or to help with other church activities. It will be amazing how easy it will become to tell others of the God we worship and the power He gives to make our lives tremendously satisfying.

This is serious business. Like the athlete, we should run to win and let nothing-absolutely nothing-get in our way of keeping God the one Ruler of our lives.

We will find, if we persist in trying to crowd God out of first place,

that the late-model car, the new French provincial furniture, the influential friends, the educational degrees, the large-membered church to serve, the popularity as a church member-all these will leave a dull taste in our mouths. Regardless of how many poor people we feed, how much money we give to the church, even how many people we bring to Christ-all these will be to no avail unless we indeed remember that God comes first.

Clarice Rose

Prayer

Prayer is to the soul what breathing is to the body; and we can no more live a strong, healthy, spiritual life without prayer than we can live a good, healthy, physical life without breathing. The secret place of prayer is to the soul a coating station, a watering place, a resting place, a fable filled with good things. Prayer is to the soul what steam is to the engine, gasoline is to the car, and water to the garden.

The neglect of prayer is dangerous to the soul. One had better neglect his meals or forget to go to bed than to forget or neglect to hold sweet communion and blessed fellowship with his Heavenly Father. It is here we get renewed strength, Heavenly wisdom, greater love, and a deeper, closer walk with God.

Prayer is the heart-cry of a child to his Father for a real need. The Father knows, hears and answers. Prayer will give one a good appetite for the Word of God. Prayer moves the arm of the Almighty God. He has promised to do of our request. Without prayer the Christian soon becomes a fruitless, powerless, joyless, useless professor. Prayer strengthens every abiding grace, and through it we are led to deeper depths and higher heights.

Prayer is asking favors of God our Father, giving Him thanks for His sweet blessings, and listening to His sweet voice. Meditation is a part of our prayer life. To be still and let God speak to your inmost soul through His Word is indeed sweet.

Prayer changes things, moves things, and brings to pass. Keep a real love in your heart for the secret place of prayer if you want to prosper and have good success in your soul and in the Lord's work. Prayer prepares the preacher for the pulpit and the Christian for the pew. A good, hungry church, prayed up, and a preacher prayed through and on fire will help bring revival.

Prayer is the main-spring to the soul. The prayerless life is like flowers with no sweet fragrance, a tree with no fruit, a cloud with no rain, a cistern with no water, a well gone dry, or a garden with only weeds. Secret prayer alone with God in sweet communion is the secret of having a good spiritual appetite, rapid growth in grace, and a successful Christian life.

The first great means of a revival is prayer, the second great means is more prayer, and the third great means is praying clear through. Then, to keep it going, keep on praying.

Prayer is the power that moves the drive wheels and keeps things in motion. Enough prayer and waiting on God will cause some Joshua, who is humble enough, to hear God's voice say, "Clean up the church."

We cannot pray without the Spirit of God to help our infirmities with groanings which cannot be uttered. Oh, for the outpouring of God's Spirit on His saints everywhere, an outpouring of old-fashioned prayer-prevailing prayer.

Revelation 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2 Know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Revelation 3:13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.



Is a Revival Needed in Your Heart?

Brother Charlie Green

Have You Lost Something?

Though we preach the Word of God under the anointing of the Spirit, I am concerned that some people look upon the man who is doing the preaching and fail to realize that the authority comes from the Word of God. Through the message of the Gospel, Jesus Christ is the measuring rod, measuring out His Truth to hearts. If people kick up against the message, they are kicking against Jesus Christ, the Author and the Finisher of our faith.

Dear one, we are living in a day and age when the fear of God and reverence and respect for the man of God, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God have been lost. This is what happened to the people in the Laodicean church. Today we are

living in the Laodicean age, and those spirits are knocking on each of our heart's doors, trying to get us to lose reverence and the fear of God for the message of God. When God's Word goes forth, you need to forget who is preaching and give heed to the message that God has sent. A man's personality has nothing to do with it. If you refuse the Gospel message, you are refusing Jesus Christ. You cannot take just a little portion of Him. Some people want to take only a little bit of the Gospel message that suits their fancy. Brother, sister, you must take it all, whether you like it or not.

If you are not careful, you will get in the same condition that the people in our Scripture lesson did. What was that? Jesus spoke to them from His Word, and His Spirit

knocked at their hearts' doors, but they said, in so many words, "We do not need that." When one gets in that shape, he is in terrible trouble with God. Sad to say, many people are doing the same thing the Laodicean church did. They are talking back to Christ. They put the message on others instead of letting the Holy Spirit write it upon the tables of their hearts. They need a revival in their hearts, but they fail to realize it.

Dear one, is a revival needed in your heart? Do you need a revival that will prick your heart as never before and cause you to be more sensitive to the Spirit of God? Do you need a revival to bring back a fervent prayer life before God Almighty? If you are not careful, you will lose the fervency from your prayer life.

Seek God Earnestly

In Haggai, Chapter 1, we can read about a people who were doing their own thing, They were building their houses and going after the things of the flesh. In Chapter 2 we can see that the Spirit of God stirred the people, and they got back to the place where they ought to have been. Haggai 2:3 says, "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? . . ."

Saint, how do you see the Church of God today? Do you see her in her first glory? Is she just as glorious to you as she was the first time God showed her to you? Though the old ship of Zion has gone through many storms and many battles, I am glad that the Church of God still has her glory and that God is in the midst of her. Jesus Christ is still the Head of the church, and He will lead her on victoriously. Dear one, you need to make sure that you have clean and white garments, spiritually speaking.

The Laodicean church got in such a state that the Christ of Calvary spoke to them and showed them their true condition, but they stood up and talked back to Him. Brother, sister, whenever a circumstance comes along that you do not understand or that you disagree with, do you stand up and talk back or do you fall on your knees before Jesus Christ and seek Him in earnest prayer? In too many cases, people have become as the Laodicean church.

It is necessary that you seek God earnestly and keep first things first when it comes to your worship to God. I can remember back in my home as I was growing up. When people gathered in, the first thing on their hearts and minds was to seek God's face together as a group. I never heard about church problems or another brother or sister's problems. Christian friend, if you truly seek God in the right manner, your primary objective will not be to fo-

cus on the problems around you or what this brother or sister has done. The Bible still teaches that love covers a multitude of sins. Love does not cause one to go around knocking on doors and calling people to talk about a brother or a sister.

People need to get back to 2 Chronicles 7:14, which states, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Notice that the Lord said, "If my people." Who is that? That is the Church of the Living God. He said "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves" You cannot really seek God unless you humble yourself.

Saint, do you remember how it was when you were convicted of your sins? You were humble, and there was no pride left in you; you were broken, and you humbled yourself at the foot of the Cross and received help. What makes you think it is going to be any different if you receive help from God today? If we want healing for our land and healing for the church, we must humble ourselves and seek God's face in a much greater way. It is one thing to talk about fellowship, but it is another to practice it from the heart. It is time to pull back the covers and let the measuring rod of God's eternal Truth reveal conditions as He sees them. If you do riot allow the measuring rod to real your true condition, you are in bad shape.

Consider Your Ways

Let us go to Haggai, Chapter 1, to see why people lost sight of the glory of the Church of the Living God. Today there is a drifting away from people seeing the beauty of God's house. Why is it so hard to get people to reverence God? This spirit is working on people more than they want to admit, and God wants you to understand and see conditions as

they truly are. When a true man of God sees these spirits working on people, he will stand up and cry out, to warn the people of the sword that is coming upon the land. These unclean spirits are working on the people of God.

Haggai 1:2-4 reads, "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built [these people had gotten a spirit of indifference and neglect concerning the house of God and the work of God]. Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" The Prophet was speaking of God's house. At that time God's work lay dormant because the people had lost their desire and their motivation to work in the house of God, or God's temple, yet they were busy. Jesus said to seek first the Kingdom of God. That does not mean only when you get saved; it means continually, until you lay down the robe of flesh.

The people in Haggai's day were living in their ceiled houses, but they were letting the house of God and the work of God lie desolate. The Prophet came along to stir them. He said in Haggai 1:5, "Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways." God is merciful and considerate. Therefore, he is asking you to consider your ways. How do you see this house? You cannot see the Church of God any more glorious or precious than you value your personal experience with God. Are you lazy and slothful concerning your spiritual house? Do you need a revival of truly seeking God's face for your needs? You need to seek God as never before.

I mentioned a Scripture earlier in this message concerning love. This is an agape love. Let us read what Peter wrote in 1 Peter 4:8: "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." That does not mean we should put our approval upon them, but if a

person does commit sin, you ought to work to restore such a one, lest you also be tempted. It is harder for a backslider to get back to God when he has to climb over and under and around things that have been said. If you are not careful, your ears will become as a garbage dump.

"Break Up Your Fallow Ground"

We are living in a very dangerous age. In this battle of Armageddon, the battle is between right and wrong. The devil has one thing in mind, and that is to bring the saints down to where they just talk and do not spend enough time seeking God. Is a revival needed in your heart? Let the measuring rod check you. Do you spend more time talking than you do seeking God in prayer? Jesus, our example, stole away to pray often. He was abused, criticized, spit on, mocked, and scourged. He suffered more than all of us put together would suffer in a lifetime, yet He opened not His mouth. Many times He spent the night on His knees seeking God, seeking His power and strength for the deliverance He needed and for the suffering He had to go through. Jesus saw the value of souls.

How many people are out on the highway of sin because they cannot climb over an old, critical spirit or an old, gossiping spirit? If more people who claim to be saints would pray more and talk less, there would be far fewer problems. It is time to let the measuring rod of God bring the correction that is needed. The Church of God is destined for Heaven. She is on the way, whether you are or not. You are only going to be in the old ship of Zion if you hear the Word and let the Word and the Spirit of God do the pruning, the chastising, and the rebuking that is necessary. The devil is trying to work, and it is time to humble yourself and pray and seek God, and then He will bring healing to our land.

Often it takes real effort to get to

the place where people will humble themselves. Why is that? There is too much pride in their hearts. What do people need to do? Hosea 10:12 instructs, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." What is fallow ground? It is hard ground that needs to be broken up. You need to allow the Word of God to be as a hammer. Have you allowed your heart to become hard?

How does one's heart become hard? One way is by not living the message. When you do not walk in the light that God gives you, your spirit can become insensitive and feel that you have need of nothing. Jesus often speaks through the Word of God to show you a need. If you refuse to obey the Spirit of God, you have too much pride. Once your heart becomes hard, you can become deceived and become as the Laodicean church was. Though the message comes straight to your heart, you will say, "I have need of nothing." The next thing you know, you will be saying, "That's just what the preacher thinks." Well, you can think that for the rest of your living days, but you will end up lost.

The Gospel will let you know right where you are, and then it is up to you to do what you know you ought to do. What are you going to do? Are you going to allow the Word of God to break up your fallow ground? Are you going to allow Him to control your tongue? You said you would go with Him all the way. The only way a revival can take place in your heart is to humble yourself and earnestly seek God in fervent prayer.

Do you need help along any of the lines that I mentioned in this message? Remember, God said, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal the land."

(Cassette C-2308A)

Surrender

This life is so uncertain
Every moment lying fast,
O my dear one, turn to Jesus,
Death and hell will come at
last.

Jesus gives you time to serve
Him
Do not waste these flying
hours;
For they vanish oh, so quickly
Like the dried and withered
flowers.

All your life's a fleeting vapor,
How soon 'twill all be past;
But the joy of serving Jesus
Will the universe outlast.

How the worldly things allure
you,
And old Satan holds you fast.
Turn to Jesus—do it quickly
He'll forgive your guilty past.

He will break the power that
holds you
In a life of sin and shame;
He will give you life eternal,
For that's why from Heaven
He came.

You've been warned by those
who love you,
"Come to Jesus, come just
now."
Do not wait until the death
sweat
Lies so cold upon your brow.

If You gain a world of pleasure
And you lose your soul at last,
You'll regret it then forever
For your dark and guilty past.

Heed the call when first you
hear it;
Don't put off from day to day.
Quickly come to Christ your
Savior
Walk the straight and narrow
way.

Paul T. Tarbert

Habakkuk 3:17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the

fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

19 The LORD God is my strength, and

he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.

The Need of Having Invincible Faith



Brother E. David Stegmeier

Triumphant Faith in God

Another translation of this Scripture passage says: "Even though the fig trees are all destroyed, and there is neither blossom left for fruit; and though the olive crops all fail; and the fields lie barren; even if the flocks die in the fields; and the cattle barns are empty, yet will I rejoice in the Lord" (verses 17-18). God has laid upon my heart the need of having a faith without doubt or discouragement, a triumphant faith in God. The Christian's attitude should be, "No matter what I see or experience, I will rejoice in God." God is in control. The church is His and the work is His. Nothing can thwart the on-

ward march of the Church of God. She will go forward; she is invincible. The Book of Habakkuk was written by a minor prophet who prophesied during the reign of Jahoachin, who was a very wicked man. The Word says he was evil in the sight of the Lord. During this time, the Prophet saw many discouraging things, just as God's people see many discouraging things today. Many things happen that could daunt your faith or progress for God. Let us not look at the conditions, but let us look to God and His Word. One song says, "*There is no use to tell me That God will prove untrue, For I have tried him, brother, And know what he will do.*" I have tried

God, and He has never proven untrue.

Romans 15:4 says, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, [We can learn many lessons from the Old Testament. Some people have said, 'Brother Stegmeier, you preach often from the Old Testament.' My reply is, 'There is much to be learned from the Old Testament.' We can learn a lesson from this passage of Scripture.] that we through patience [We all need patience in this walk with God. He will vindicate His people and His Word; just be patient. Luke 21:19 tells us, 'In your patience possess ye your souls.'] and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." We

can get comfort from the Scriptures, and we should derive more patience as we study the Word of God.

Another translation says, "These things that were written in the Scriptures so long ago are to teach us patience and to encourage us." God's people need invincible faith that will triumph in every situation. These Scriptures were written to teach patience and to bring encouragement so that God's people would look forward expectantly to the time when God would conquer sin and death and bring all of this to pass. He said He would bring down the high places of the devil. The fortresses of the devil can be conquered through faith in God, through prayer, and through patience. Situations that came upon the saints of God happened for our examples. If you lack faith or if you are discouraged, you need to get alone with God and read the Word. Sometimes friends will disappoint you or lead you astray, but God never will. If you are in tune with God, He plans your life perfectly. If you keep the flesh subdued and in the background, God's will shall be done.

Growing in Faith

In our Scripture text this example of what happened to Habakkuk should be an encouragement to you, child of God. His faith and trust in God should inspire you, strengthen you, and bolster your faith and hope in God. Faith is inspired and strengthened by hearing and reading the Word of God, not by reading the newspaper, by listening to the news on the radio, or by talking on the telephone. The Scripture tells us in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." As the Word of God is preached, believed, and practiced, you should grow in faith. I have seen people in the same congregation who have grown tremendously and others who have withered and died spiritually. Nevertheless, if you will listen and practice what you hear from the man of God, you will

grow in faith. Faith comes from God, but the Word is the instrument that brings it. It flows through your pastor. Therefore, when one receives and believes and practices the Word of God that has been preached, he will grow.

Hebrews 4:2 says, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." You must believe and practice the Word of God in order for it to benefit you. Unbelief hinders many people from receiving the Word of God and benefiting from it. Unbelief is one of our greatest enemies today, and it is always present.

The Book of Habakkuk is seldom referred to or read, yet it has a tremendous lesson. The Prophet's very serious message is one that you and I can benefit from today. The people in that period of time were sinking deeper and deeper into sin and idolatry. As we look around today, we can see that our world is sinking much deeper into sin and ungodliness. Things once done behind closed doors are done openly today. The devil is trying to desensitize God's people and get them to accept this ungodliness when it is 180 percent wrong! May God help us today.

Habakkuk had prophesied about the impending judgments of God, and they are coming. For many people these judgments have already come, but for others the judgments are yet coming. For a period of time it seemed that God was unmoved by the situation. Have you ever wondered, "Where is God in all of this?" At times God seems unmoved and unaffected by ungodliness; nevertheless, God sees it, and He is in control. Someone may say, "Evil outweighs the good, and the ungodly outnumber the godly." That has been true since the dawn of time. In Noah's time how many ministers encouraged him? He was the only man of God in the entire world. Do you feel that you are the only one standing true? No, God has

many godly men all over the world. I do not know who they all are, but God does. God's people are in contact with Him; they have no earthly headquarters. God is still in control. The church is not controlled by the Pope, a bishop, a group of men, or a group of ministers. God alone governs and controls the church. It has always been that way, and it always will be.

What did God's people do in ancient times when they did not have telephones or airplanes to fly to get together to confer? The Holy Spirit told people in China, England, South America, and Greenland the very same Truth. The Holy Spirit still works that way yet today. He is not dead in the streets; He is alive in the Church of God. He is not sick; He is alive and well. Praise God forever! In our Scripture text the Prophet's faith was being severely tested and tried. Job was also tested. Child of God, sometimes your faith will be tested and tried.

The Prophet was having a tremendous struggle in his mind. Do you ever have a terrible struggle in your mind? Sometimes I have had a struggle, wondering, "Lord, how about all of this? What is going on?" Sometimes I ask Him, "Lord, what can I do? I would like to talk to people, but I cannot force others to do what is right." Godly people can be reasoned with, taught easily, and led easily, but they should understand what the Truth is. We are not blindly led.

The Prophet Habakkuk had a tremendous struggle. Doubts assailed and the fiery darts of the devil were mercilessly hurled at him. Saint of God, the devil will have no mercy on you. He has no mercy on any congregation proclaiming the Truth, so do not ask the devil for mercy. It is something that he does not have. Paul said, "Quit you like men" (1 Corinthians 16:13).

Be Steadfast and Unmovable

In our Scripture text, no doubt, the enemy was relentless in his ef-

forts to disturb the Prophet of God. The devil is relentless yet today; he will not leave you alone. Do you think you are going to have a reprieve for a while? No. Sometimes I say, "Lord, it just seems that I can't go a step further." Have you ever felt that way? Sometimes you need to step out in faith, no matter what you see or how you feel. Child of God, step into the waters, and they will recede.

Habakkuk probably had many perplexing questions. Has the question ever loomed up in your mind, "Why doesn't God intervene? Isn't He watching? Doesn't He see what is going on?" Have you ever wondered, "Does Jesus care?" Yes! He cares, but sometimes the old devil will cause you to wonder, "Does God answer prayer?" Yes, God answers prayer, though sometimes God may answer differently than the way you expect or want Him to answer.

Habakkuk remonstrated with these words in Habakkuk 1:2, "O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!" Saint, you need to leave things in God's hands. He is working and may be doing something that you may never understand. God's design and plan is high above ours. His thoughts are so lofty that our finite minds may never understand. You must learn to leave things with God and know that He is working for your good. The words of the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:35 read, "To me [God was speaking] belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: [In other words, in due time God will take care of it. You need to just mind your own business, stay true to God, and obey your pastor. Also, you must attend the church services every time the doors are open; sing, pray, and testify. Their feet will slide in due time.] for the day of their calamity is at hand." Another translation says this: "Israel [or the church] is my special people, sealed as jewels within my treasury. Vengeance is mine, and I decree the punishment of all

our enemies. Their doom is sealed, the Lord will see His people are righted." What is more powerful than the Word of God? A real spirit of peace and tranquility is in a congregation when the people resign everything to Him.

The Bible is God's work. Let us look at the rest of the story. In the end of the Book of Habakkuk, we see the Prophet triumphing. We read of his beginning to gain the victory. Habakkuk 2:4 says, "The just shall live by his faith." If you are not living by faith or living according to what you see, you will be up and down spiritually. God wants you to be consistent. A "fair-weather Christian" is one who decides to stay in bed instead of going to church if it is raining. If he gets up in the morning and it is ninety degrees, he says, "It's too hot. I'll stay inside where the air conditioning is." Yet, when the weather is just right, he says, "This is a good time to go fishing." God wants you to be a consistent Christian who is steadfast and unmovable.

Habakkuk said, "The just shall live by his faith." Once Habakkuk's faith began to take hold of God's promises, his doubts and misgivings flew away. Saint, your faith is being sorely tried. Situations may trouble and threaten you, but God is in control. You need to have triumphant faith in God and never give it up.

The Key to Maintaining Victory

Habakkuk is an excellent example to us. No matter what happened, the Prophet said, "I will rejoice in the Lord." You will have moments when you are driven by the enemy to doubt and become discouraged with conditions. However, you should be driven closer to God in these situations. You need to take the example of the Prophet and get alone with God. Child of God, what should you do in troublesome times? Should you get on the telephone and spread it all across the country. No! You need to get alone with God. Find a solitary place and pray. There is a

song that says:

*When storms of life around me beating,
When rough the path that I have trod,
Within my closet door retreating,
I love to be alone with God.*

*Alone with God, the world forbidden;
Alone with God, oh blest retreat.
Alone with God and in Him hidden,
To hold with Him communion sweet.*

*What, though the clouds have gathered
o'er me
What, though I pass beneath the rod,
God's perfect will there lies before me
When I am thus alone with God.*

Too many victories are lost and too many people are misled by conferring with flesh and blood instead of conferring with God. One poet said, "Tis there I find new strength for duty, As o'er the sands of time I plod. I see the King in all His beauty While resting there alone with God." When you are troubled with the thought that God has withdrawn Himself from the problems of the world and you wonder if He has abandoned the church, you need to get alone with God and meditate on His Word. Habakkuk said, "I will stand upon my watch" (Habakkuk 2:1). In other words, Habakkuk was saying, "In these times I had better be watchful, because the devil will come with his fiery darts and discouraging thoughts. Therefore, I will watch my heart and guard my attitudes." Saint, you need to watch the thoughts that permeate your mind. Ask yourself, "What is the source of these thoughts? Where are these thoughts coming from?" In times of great trouble and deep waters, you need to focus your attention on God and His Word.

At a certain time in the Psalmist David's life, he struggled with thoughts in a similar situation. The Bible says that he went into the sanctuary of God, and there he understood their end (Psalm 73:17). In troublesome times, getting to the house of worship is extremely important. Friend, when you are dis-

couraged and times are rough, you need to get to church. You should never lay out of church. That is where you can receive an understanding of the Truth. Often it seems that people who have left the Truth are prospering. When you see them, they say, "Praise the Lord! We're doing great!" However, do not forget that God will have the final word.

Live Accordingly to Righteous Principles

Habakkuk said, "I will stand upon my watch." Saint, you must never give way to doubts and bitterness against God. Do not be wounded by fiery darts. The answers to all your questions need to come through the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and the man of God. If you look at people, you may stumble and fall. Too many people are affected by what others do. We sing a song which says that many start in the race, but not very many will ever go through.

Child of God, if you are going to be strong in your Christian walk, you must look to God. He will never fail you, and His Word will meet your every need. Romans 8:31 says, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" The Prophet Baalam should have taken this more seriously. In Numbers 23:8 he said, "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy [or work against], whom the Lord hath not defied?" I was always taught to be very careful of putting my finger on a man of God. My mother taught me that very seriously.

Why does God sometimes wait to vindicate His people? He is a merciful God. His mercy is beyond our comprehension. He is very long-suffering. Peter said in 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." I am thankful that God

is long-suffering. He was long-suffering with me. I have relatives that I am concerned about, so I am glad that He is long-suffering. In Habakkuk 2:3 we read, "Though it tarry, wait for it [God has a time for everything]; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Your faith, your patience, and your trust in God will never be disappointed. All evil and wrong will ultimately come to an end.

In the last chapter of the Book of Habakkuk, Habakkuk rested confidently in God. He triumphed through his faith in God. Many people place too much faith and trust in their friends. Some people are too attached to friends. Dear one, above all else, you need to do what is right according to righteous principles. We are only the friends of God and the friends of one another if we are truly doing the will of God. Other people place faith and trust in their good deeds, in their reputations, or in their family heritage. They say, "I am a child of a great minister" or "I had a father who was a great Sunday school teacher."

Some people have their faith and trust in money, false religious refuges, church joining, baptism, shaking the preacher's hand, and so on. The best way to face the uncertain future is to reverence the Word of God and the man of God. We do not know what is going to come in the future. We may have to give our lives standing for the Word of God, but I read in my Bible that God will not do anything without warning His prophets first. Therefore, you had better stay close to the Prophet of God. I am going to reiterate: to prepare for the uncertain future, you need to respect every word in the Book and respect your pastor.

Child of God, no matter what happens, if you lose it all and become forsaken by all, remember that God will never leave you or forsake you. Your victory is in God. There is a song I sang many times as a boy growing up, which says, "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world." God is our strength and our help.

You need a triumphant, invincible faith in this day as in no other day. No matter what comes, you must maintain your faith and confidence in God. Your present discomfort or the things that you are going through are more easily borne if you realize that God is in control. A triumphant faith is possessed and gained by looking to God. It will keep you steady in times of great trouble and great stress.

Patiently and Faithfully Persist

Paul's admonition to the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 15:58 was, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." If your heart is in tune with God, it is in tune with the Truth.

God will give you the ability to walk in high places. Again, our Scripture text says: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls [nothing to eat]: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." In other words, you can walk in high places while people exist down in the smog in the valleys. Despite all the ugly things that permeate the valleys, you can walk in high places where the air is pure and ethereal, where your vision is clear.

Child of God, you can have victory over your enemies. They cannot touch you because you have hinds' feet. With the feet of a deer, you can go right up spiritual mountains. In essence, David said, "I will look to the mountains, from whence cometh my strength. My strength cometh from God." God will give His people hinds' feet and make them to walk upon high places.

The prayer of Habakkuk that started with apprehension, fear, and many misgivings ended with a song of joy and praise. You must remember that God has a purpose in everything that happens. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:17, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The more we go through successfully and faithfully for God, the greater the glory will be. The greater the battle, the greater the victory. One translation says, "These troubles and sufferings of ours are after all quite small, won't last very long, yet this short time of distress will result in God's richest blessings upon us for ever and ever." Saint, your faith is strengthened by the trials that you pass through. Therefore, you need to patiently and faithfully persist; stay right in there. You should accept everything that comes to you, knowing that it is working for your good. Possessing this kind of triumphant faith will show the world that you have something that they need, and then, hopefully, they will seek what you have.

What are the benefits that we can derive from having this kind of invincible faith in God? I want you to read a song entitled "The Virtue of Faith."

*As far above the howling storm,
Secure from danger's reach and
harm,
Triumphantly the eagle flies,
My soul on wings of faith would
rise.*

*When raging is the tempest's blast,
Ere yet its wrath is over past—
My soul would rise from earthly
woe,
To leave the stormy winds below.*

*Upon the troubled, restless wave,
His fearful, trembling ones to save,
The Master walked and calmed the
sea,
The wildly tossing Galilee.*

*By faith again I hear his voice,
In tones which make my heart
rejoice,
When fears my soul with terror
thrill,
He gently whispers, "Peace, be
still."*

*The lilies clothed in garments fair,
The ravens flying thro' the air—
Our blessed Father cares for all;
He seeth e'en the sparrow's fall;*

*His children more He surely loves,
Their cry His heart with pity
moves:
Tho' thorns bestrew the path we've*

*trod,
He whispers still, 'Have faith in
God.'*

*The waves around may fiercely roll,
They cannot harm my trusting
soul;
Regarding not what I may see,
My faith, O Lord, ascends to thee.*

*The darkest night and brazen sky
Are pierced by faith's unfailing eye:
My cry shall be till time shall cease,
'O blessed Lord, my faith increase.'*

I have often been on a plane and the ride became bumpy. Then the pilot would say, "Just give us a little time and we will be up above the turbulence." Christian friend, you need to fly above the spiritual turbulence. The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

My prayer is, "God, help me that my faith will increase." If you need something from the Lord, He wants to supply that need.

(Cassette C-4222M)

"THOU THEREFORE ENDURE HARDNESS AS A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST. " —2 TIMOTHY 2:3

"I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT. " —2 TIMOTHY 4: 7

You are enlisted, you wear the uniform, you ought to fight; victory is certain, the honors are everlasting—think only of Him who is your "Leader and Commander." You will have no such opportunity in Heaven. Lose no time, then, in waking up to the consciousness that you are a soldier and that you must learn to fight. There is no discharge in this war and no truce with the enemy.



Stain on the Dress

A young couple was deliriously happy when a beautiful little girl was born. This young couple was unsaved; in fact, they had somehow grown to hate anything and everything that had anything to do with God and His Son Jesus Christ.

Instead of presenting the baby to the Lord for His blessing, they made a vow that the little girl, whom they called Melinda, was never to be allowed to be exposed to anything that had anything to do with Christianity. Throughout her young girlhood, she wasn't allowed to go to Sunday school. When a preacher or a soul winner from a local church visited them, Melinda was sent to her room before the visitors were let in.

Melinda's parents and grandparents were well-to-do. She had more toys and dolls than she could ever keep up with and ate only the best of foods and wore the very best clothing money could buy. Her parents made sure of her secular and cultural training. She studied piano, voice, and ballet with the best teachers and instructors that money could afford. Her parents were doing a very good job of keeping her away from learning anything about the Lord.

One day Melinda's mother was baking her husband a birthday cake and discovered she was missing a certain ingredient. She called her beautiful nine-year-old daughter and gave her some money to go to the store to purchase what she needed. She was instructed to go straight

down the street and come right home. Melinda, glad to have a chance to go out on the sunny spring day, skipped down the street. She went into the store and made the purchase and started back down the street toward home. On her way home she decided it might be fun to take a different route home, so she turned left at an intersection and walked up a back street. She knew that it would intersect a little further up with the street that would lead to her home, so no harm could come of it. As she walked along, she began to hear some pretty singing and music. The further she walked, the louder it became, and finally she saw that the singing and music was coming from a big building just across the street from her.

Melinda loved music and singing, and she possessed the natural curiosity of a nine year old, so she crossed the street and entered into the building. Though she did not know it, this was a mission house, and inside was a great number of down-and-outers a cross section of the folks from the lower echelon of society. Many folks seated there had experienced the regenerating power of receiving Jesus Christ into their lives. Some were there just fulfilling their obligation for having been given breakfast and perhaps some article of clothing.

As Melinda shyly entered, they looked back and smiled at the beautiful little girl. She sat down in the back, thinking she would stay just a little while and listen to the group on the podium sing. They were singing a beautiful song, but one she had never heard before.

The group finished their song, and a pleasant-faced gentleman came to the podium and welcomed everyone. After a word of prayer, he began to preach. Melinda knew she should get up and hurry on home, but something seemed to hold her to her seat. The preacher was talking about who Jesus is, and the many compassionate miracles He performed. He described his arrest, trial, and cruel treatment by the Roman soldiers and King Herod, and finally His Crucifixion. At that very time of year when lambs were being sacrificed for a covering for sins, Jesus Christ became the

Lamb of God, not to cover our sins but to take them away. Jesus had never committed a sin as we have, but He took all our sins to the Cross, and He was nailed there, shedding His precious blood to cleanse us from all sin and make us ready for Heaven.

Tears flowed from Melinda's beautiful hazel eyes. The singing group came back to the podium to join the missionary. The piano started and they began to sing, "There's Room at the Cross for You." After the first verse, they started an altar call. With the group singing softly behind him, the missionary said, "Some of you have gone too long, living your life without Jesus and His wonderful gift of salvation. Here at the mission house we have offered many of you gifts of food, shelter and articles of clothing. You have accepted those gifts, and we are glad, but a greater gift is being offered—the greatest gift ever offered to anyone—the gift of salvation. With that gift, another wonderful thing comes to pass: you are adopted into the family of God and become joint heirs with Christ."

Melinda found herself walking down the aisle to the altar in front of the podium. Her face was streaked with tears. A lady knelt beside Melinda and hugged her. She then took the Bible and quietly explained how she could give her heart and life to Jesus and be saved. Melinda prayed a sinner's prayer. There was "joy unspeakable and full of glory" in Melinda's heart as she left the mission house.

When she had entered into the mission house, the sun had been shining, but now a cold rain was coming down. Melinda knew she would be punished for being gone so long and worrying her parents. By the time she arrived home, her pretty dress was soaking wet and her blonde curls hung limp down the side of her face. She shivered. Melinda's mother angrily jerked her around to face her, asking her questions about where she had been for so long. Her father came in the room with an expression on his face that scared Melinda.

Finally, Melinda said, "Mama, Daddy, I'm sorry I worried you by being gone so long, but I have something wonderful to tell you. I heard

some pretty singing and music, and I went inside a building. They told me all about Jesus dying on a cross. Mama, Daddy, I gave my heart to Jesus and . . ." Melinda was interrupted by a loud anguished sound coming from deep in her father's throat. He uttered blasphemous profane exclamations and became as a man possessed. Melinda had never seen her father like that, and then she saw him strip off his heavy belt and approach her.

Melinda's mother wept in loud cries as her husband beat the little girl until she fell to the floor, mercifully passing out. For two days Melinda was confined to her bedroom. The harsh beating had left not only bruises, but some lacerations. Her mother applied ointments and alcohol rub, saying very little, and sometimes with tears in her eyes.

The morning of the third day, Melinda awakened with a raging fever and raspy breathing. A doctor was summoned; his diagnosis being double pneumonia. Those were the days before penicillin was available and several medications were tried, but Melinda's condition only worsened. The fever raged on and Melinda moved in and out of consciousness, sometimes murmuring bits and pieces of the wonderful things she had heard

at the mission. Her mother sat by her bed patting her forehead with a cold cloth. The doctor came by briefly, but left sadly shaking his head.

Just before dark Melinda sat up in bed and called for her mother. Her mother, having lost many hours of sleep, had dozed off when she was awakened by Melinda's call. When she saw her sitting up in bed, it gave her a happy heart. She thought the fever had broke and there would be a chance for Melinda to recover after all.

"Mama," Melinda said softly.

"Yes, sweetheart, I'm here."

"Mama, I want you to bring me the dress I was wearing that day."

"No, honey," her mother groaned. "You don't want to see that thing. It was soiled and torn and had some bloodstains on it. I threw it in the trash."

"Please, Mama, go and get it for me."

"But why, Melinda?" her mother protested.

Melinda's father appeared in the doorway of the bedroom with guilt and grief written all over his haggard face. Melinda had lain back down again, closing her eyes. She hadn't seen her father enter. She spoke softly, but loud enough for both parents to hear her final words here on

earth. "Mama, an angel came and told me I would be going to Heaven soon, and I wanted to take the dress with me so I could show Jesus that I shed some blood for Him . . ."

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:14)

"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:2-6)

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

Selected

[Guest Editorial--continued from page 2] his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." There are some truths that we must understand to clearly view this verse.

In Revelation, Chapter 22, we can see the tree of life. John was in the midst of receiving a vision. Revelation 9:17 states, "And thus I saw . . . in the vision." Revelation 1:1 tells us the nature of that vision: ". . . he sent and signified . . ." The word *signified* means "revealed by signs." *Webster's Dictionary* tells us that a sign is a symbol. Therefore, the nature of this vision is symbolic.

What was John viewing when he saw that scene? To properly understand it, we must go to Revelation, Chapter 21, where it began. Revelation 21:2 says, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, pre-

pared as a bride adorned for her husband." Here we see, in figurative expressions, the institution of the church coming down from God out of Heaven on the Day of Pentecost. How do we know that? John said, "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem ." What is Jerusalem a figure of? Hebrews 12:22-23 tells us: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God [Revelation 21:2 calls it the holy city, which is the same entity], the heavenly Jerusalem [which is the same as the New Jerusalem that John spoke of], and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly . . ." These expressions denote the various attributes and facets of what he called in the next phrase the "church of the firstborn." He was showing the divine nature of God's church, how she came down from God out of Heaven.

When did the church come down from God out of Heaven? Acts 2:1-2 says: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." This is a picture of the morning time when the church came down from God on the Day of Pentecost and was instituted in A.D. 33. The Holy Ghost came down from God out of Heaven. Romans 8:10 tells us that the Spirit is life. On the Day of Pentecost God let the New Jerusalem come down out of Heaven. Through the personality of the Holy Spirit, He gave life to the believers and quickened them and made them new creatures so they could live and walk in newness of life.

Brother Earl R. Borders